

Grahitodha Bharata

Imso 255-2

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत



प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

Katha Upanishad, I, iii, 6

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—Swami Vivekananda.

VOL. XXV]

MARCH 1920

[No. 284]

CONVERSATIONS AND DIALOGUES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA,

(RECORDED BY A DISCIPLE.)

PART II.—XVI.

[Place—Belur Math. Year—1901.

Subjects—*The Atman is very near and still why the perception of the Atman is not easily attained.—When the state of ignorance vanishes and knowledge becomes manifest, then doubts and questions do not arise in the mind of the Jiva.—Swamiji's meditativeness.]*

Swamiji is still a little ill. Kavirāji medicine has done him good. Living only on milk diet for a month, his body is showing a great comeliness and beauty and the light and radiance of his large eyes has increased still more.

For two days the disciple is at the Math and doing personal services to Swamiji as much as he can. To-day is the dark night of the new moon. It is arranged that the disciple shall take turns with Swami Nirbhayananda in attending on Swamiji during the night. Now it is evening.

While attending on Swamiji, the disciple asked, "The Atman which is all-

pervading, omnipresent, interpenetrating atoms and molecules, the life of the life of Jivas, is so very near, still why is It not perceived?"

Swamiji.—Do you see yourself that you have eyes? When others speak of your eyes then you get some idea, "I have got eyes." Again when dust and sand enter your eyes and set up irritation, then you feel that you have got eyes. Similarly the realisation of this universal Atman which is inner than the innermost is not easily attained. Reading from Scriptures or hearing from the mouth of the preceptor brings some perception, but when the hard lashes of the sorrow and pain

of the world make the heart sore, when on the death of near and dear relatives, the Jiva thinks himself helpless and without support, when the impenetrable and unsurmountable darkness about the life hereafter agitates his mind, then does the Jiva turn towards the Atman. Therefore is sorrow helpful to the knowledge of the Atman. But there should be the power of retentiveness of the lessons of sorrow and experience. Those who live and die listlessly like cats and dogs, are they men? He is a man who even when agitated by the sharp interaction of pleasure and pain is thoughtful and discriminating, and thinking them to be of an evanescent nature, becomes devoted to the Atman. This is the difference between men and animals. That which is nearest is least observed. The Atman is the nearest of the near, therefore the listless, unsteady mind of man gets no elate of It. But the alert, calm, controlled and discriminating Jiva, transcending the external world, enters the inner world and realises the glory of the Atman and becomes great. Then he attains to the knowledge of the Atman, and realises the truth of scriptural texts like, "I am the Atman," "Thou art That, Svetaketu." Do you understand?

Disciple.— Yes, Sir. But why this method of attaining to the knowledge of the Atman through the path of suffering, pain and sorrow? Without all this, it would have been well if there were no creation. We were all of us at one time established and identified with the Brahman. Why then this desire for creation on the part of the Brahman? Why again this going forth of the Jiva (who in his real nature is the Brahman) along the path of birth and death, amidst the interaction of the dualities of life?

Swamiji.— When a man is intoxic-

cated he sees many hallucinations, but when his intoxication goes off then he understands them as mistaken projections of his mind. Whatever you see of this creation which is without a beginning but has an end, is only an effect of your state of intoxication; when that will vanish, such questions will not arise at all.

Disciple.— Sir, then is there no reality in the creation and preservation of the Universe?

Swamiji.— Why should not there be? So long as you have the body-consciousness and the ego-consciousness, all these remain. But when you are bereft of the body-consciousness, and devoted to the Atman and live in the Atman, then with respect to you, none of these will remain, and such questions as whether there is any creation, birth or death—will have no room then. Then you will have to say, "Where is it gone, by whom is it taken, wherein is the world merged? What a wonder it had just been observed by me but now it is non-existent!"

Disciple.— If there is no knowledge of the existence of creation, how can it be said, 'Wherein is the world merged?'

Swamiji.— Because one has to express the idea in language, therefore that mode of expression has been used. The author has tried to express in thought and language about the state where thought or language cannot reach, and therefore he has stated the fact that the world is absolutely false, in a relative mode like the above. The world has no absolute existence. Only the Brahman, which is beyond the perception and reach of mind and speech has that absolute existence. Say what more you have to ask. To-day I will put all your argumentation to rest.

The bell of the evening service at the worship-room rang at the time, and everybody went towards the worship-room. But the disciple stayed in Swamiji's room, noticing which Swamiji said, "Won't you go to the worship-room?"

Disciple.— I like to stay here.

Swamiji.— Then stay.

After some time the disciple looking outside of the room said, "To-day is the dark night of the new moon, and all the quarters are overspread with darkness. To-day is the day for Kalipuja."

Swamiji without saying anything looked through the window towards the eastern sky and fixing his gaze in that direction for some time, said, "Have you seen, there is such a deep and sombre beauty in the darkness of space!" Saying this and continuing to look at the dense mass of darkness he stood enrapt. Everything is now quiet, and only from a distance the sound of the Hymn of Sri Ramakrishna sung by the devotees in the worship-room is reaching the ear of the disciple. Observing the grave mood of Swamiji and the still calm of external nature outside shrouded in darkness, the disciple's mind was filled with an indefinable feeling of awe. After some minutes had passed Swamiji slowly began to sing a Bengali song, "O Mother, in deep shrouded darkness, Thy mass of formlessness flashes" etc. After the song was over Swamiji entered his room and sat down, with an occasional word, like "Mother," "Mother," "Kali," "Kali," on his lips. There was none else in the room then, and only the disciple was waiting in attendance on Swamiji to do his behests.

Looking at his face then, the disciple felt that Swamiji's mind was dwelling

in a distant world of thought, and afflicted in mind by this far-away attitude of his mind he said, "Now, Sir, speak with me."

Swamiji understanding the thought of the disciple smilingly said, "Can you fathom the beauty and profundity of the Atman, whose external manifestation is so sweet and beautiful?" The disciple not appreciating his far-away mood and thoughts said, "Let us stop that subject now. Why did I speak to you to-day about Kalipuja and drew your mind to the dense darkness of nature outside? Since then your mood has changed."

Swamiji noticing the disciple's attitude began another song of Kali : "O Mother, who dost manifest in the universe in so many waves of bliss, in how many forms and aspects do Thou play in manifestation?" After the song was over, he said, "This Kali is the manifestation, the play of the Brahman. Have you not heard the saying of Sri Ramakrishna, 'When It is motionless, changeless and steadfast like the Sumeru mountain, I call It Brahman, when It is creating and preserving and destroying the world, I call It Kali—but They are one and non-different. Just as the snake sometimes lies motionless and coiled up and then again it begins to move in tortuous ways, but in both cases it is the same serpent.'"

Disciple.— Yes, Sir.

Swamiji.— I shall worship the Mother with my heart's blood, then only will She be pleased. The Mother's child shall be a hero, a Mahavira. In unhappiness, sorrow, death and dissolution, the Mother's child shall remain fearless.



OCCASIONAL NOTES.

THE greatest need in modern Indian thought is a synthetic view of Indian culture, history and progress. The Vedanta represents this synthesis of Indian culture, and it has constituted a mighty stream from which has branched off a rich variety of systems of thought, religious beliefs and disciplines irrigating the life of the Hindus with a network of fertilising streams. By Vedanta we mean not only the monistic statement and position of Advaitavada but a whole culture, religious and secular, of which Advaitism and its *सत्यभूतात्मभाव* is the crest and crown and quasi-monistic and dualistic religious philosophy and outlook on life are included positions, and which has a rich base of a spiritual society, a Dharma rajya, as the framework and translation of its motive in outer life. Viewed in this light all the different cultures such as the Pauranika and Tantrika are but deductions from the Vedantic, drawing out and amplifying certain aspects of the contents of the Vedanta and filling it in with a richness and opulence of detail. Thus the Shakta, Shaiva, Saura, Ganapatya, and Vaishnava are but members of the same great family and within the Vedantic fold as much as the religious sects during the Mahomedan period, the Kavir, and Nanak *panthis*, and even the most recent reform movements of our day. Such a synthetic view is only possible if we interpret them in the light of monistic Vedanta and by the life of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Swami Vivekananda. One view of God and truth and one set of beliefs may be suited to the temperament and capacity of a number of souls gathered

in a fold and may be stressed by them, yet another view of God and truth and set of beliefs differing from the former in appearance may be equally true, for the underlying unity and truth is perceived only when they are seen in the wide ocean of Vedanta, in which a *catamaran* can stand by the side of a man-of-war. In the light of Vedanta the highest absolutism and image-worship can stand side by side, the greatest philosopher can come down to the level of an idolater and see through his eyes and feel through his heart and the worshipper of Personal God can shape his mental attitude and aim at the highest monism in which all is one.

By this synthetic vision can we feel our oneness with the whole body of Hindu people and by it only we shall be able to create powerfully in thought and life. But if without this vision we hold to particular aspects of the development of Vedantic culture to the exclusion of others, we have to stand forever in hostile camps rending the social body by internal discord, differences and quarrel. The worshipper of purified theism or formless Saguna Brahman should feel his unity with the worships of Rama and Krishna, should be able to find the underlying truth and correlate the latter with the Highest. But this can only be done by the Vedanta which is the rationale of all religious beliefs, creeds and disciplines. The insistence therefore should not be on particular beliefs, creeds and disciplines which are various within the Hindu fold, but on the manifestation

of the Divine Self or Atman of which these are various ways, and on the production of consecrated lives of blessedness, purity and love in the worshippers, in which all are efficient according to differences of capacity and temperament.

But Vedanta is not only the cementing factor of the religious life, but also the key of a harmonised religious and social life, a richness and vigour of inner and outer activity. It is this synthetic vision which the Swami Vivekananda held and which he sought to realise. Former reformers held that it was religion which led to the impoverishment of the outer social and practical life of India, but the Swami held that it was the non-application of religion in its wide amplitude, which had prevented a vigorous social life. A pronounced religious outlook does not argue a starved, feeble, and inefficient outer life. With characteristic vigour the Swami said, "I do not believe in a religion which promising me infinite bliss hereafter cannot give me happiness or efficiency in the present life." On the other hand he held that an awakening of the religious and spiritual impulse infuses vigour into all departments of our life and activity,—in social, intellectual and material activity.

But the presence of the spiritual impulse and governing idea from which all these activities flow will give them another trend and direction than if they were pursued on the basis only of outer material life and efficiency. It will take in all the activities of outer material, emotional and intellectual life and give it a spiritual colour. It will accept science or the questioning of the powers and truths of physical nature, but interpret them not as attri-

butes and products of inert physical nature, which are to be harnessed to the service of heightening only the physical comfort, luxury, efficiency, but as the translation in physical symbols of the truths of Spirit. For according to Vedanta spirit, mind, and matter are not three different entities, but one Spirit seen through different veils and on different planes, and the same general laws must obtain in each. Therefore it will accept observation, experiment and generalisation of physical phenomena but supplement them by the method of introspection and intuitive perception of the root of the physical phenomena, and thus give an added significance and meaning to physical laws and truths. Spirituality will make for a pronounced activity of intellect and reasoning, for thinking on the facts of science and life and deducing first principles, but the latter will be augmented in its work by the method of mysticism and intuition of the ultimate Truth which is at the base of human life and Nature and thus constitute so many intellectual avenues to the Spirit. For according to Vedanta, true intuition although transcending reason does not contradict it. It only embraces the intellectual order of truth in the wider order of spiritual truth, thus heightening and ennobling its contents and significance. Social activity, economic prosperity, material well-being will also be sought after, but not on their own account for the amassment of material wealth and enjoyment of pleasure *per se*, not for running out of all bounds and going in for unbridled enjoyment and power. They will be accepted as offering field for legitimate enjoyment for bringing out a harmony of the richness of all human faculties, emotional, artistic, intellectual, physical,—for only when these are properly

developed, and chastened by the spiritual motive, will their higher integration in the Spirit as Spirit be possible. A vigorous society and rich communal activity will furnish an indispensable training-ground for the growth of souls into the realisation of their Spirit and Self. They will train the practical will of man, not merely in the service of the ego, in pursuit of selfish interests and desires, and thus attain gigantic egotistical proportions, driven by the fury of passions, ready to sacrifice everything at the altar of its self-satisfaction, but to grow into the calm, enlightened but not the less powerful will, infallible of purpose and full of *maitri* and *karuna*. It will develop the human will and power of practical effectuation intensely, but also widen and amplify it from the narrow limits of the ego. Thus life and all its activities, life and all its faculties will be a *Yajna* of Karma-yoga, a consecrated flame burning at the altar of the Divine Spirit. For all these faculties and activities flow from the Divine Atman, and each enlightened in its operation, pursued with renunciation as a *sadhana* of the Highest, will ultimately bring us to our Divine nature. It is this harmony of human nature which was the Swami Vivekananda's idea of religion, and it is this harmony which he himself represented in his person. He represented the ancient Spiritual impulse and energy not shut up, or flowing in old channels, but bursting its bounds and overflowing all life and dealing victoriously with its problems and necessities. He was great not only spiritually in the arts of introspection, meditation and Samadhi, but in the state of शूद्ध्यान a towering intellect, great in subtle analysis, reasoning and discussion; of pronounced artistic capacities, a lover, worshipper and seeker of the beautiful,

and also, a gigantic man of action, the 'cyclonic Hindu,' in originating plans for the welfare of his fellow-men, putting them into action and throwing a world of energy into them. But all these notes were subdued to the music of the glorious evangel of the effulgent Self or Atman of man in which he lived and whose glory he proclaimed. His idea of a noble human destiny seems to be—to be possessed of the knowledge of Self and in its light and power to live powerfully, victoriously, and with an enlightened will in life, and when our work is finished, to enter the world-exceeding realms of bliss and immortality. The more we will study the Swami's life and teachings, the more will we find him possessed of this synthetic view of our culture, the more we will find him representative of the renascent Indian ideal in its fullness and comprehensiveness. As he himself says, "Would to God that all men were so constituted that in their minds, all these elements of philosophy, mysticism, emotion and work were equally present in full! This is the ideal, my ideal of a perfect man. * * To be harmoniously balanced in all these four directions is my ideal of religion."

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

(*Speech delivered by Sir Narayan Chadravarkar at Bombay.**)

We meet to pay our tribute of reverence and worship to the memory, the sacred memory, of one who has been rightly described as the "Awakener of the Soul of India." I regard Swami Vivekananda as the "Prophet of Modern

* On the occasion of the public celebration of the 58th birthday anniversary of Swami Vivekananda in the Morarji Goculdas Hall, Bombay.

India" and when I speak of him as a prophet of this Ancient land and the prophet of Modern Times in India, I ought to emphasise one outstanding fact of India's Life from the ancient times down to now: that while there had been other civilised countries of which it has been said by the prophets themselves, and it has been recorded by history, that those countries killed their prophets when they lived or scorned them when they were alive and afterwards worshipped them, in this country of ours we have never, very rarely if not never, committed that sacrilegious act of killing or stoning our prophets and afterwards turning round and then reverencing them. Speaking of His mother-land, Jerusalem, Christ said, "O Jerusalem who hast killed the prophets, how often could I have taken thee under my protection as the hen her chickens and save thee?" Never has it fallen, never has there been given occasion for anybody to say that of India, and in celebrating to-day the worshipful memory of Swami Vivekananda, we are proving true to this holy tradition of our country and I hope, I pray, now and hereafter, that we shall take care to treasure such a tradition and act in accordance with it and not catch the *incognito* spirit of what is called modern independence and liberty and never regard any prophet who speaks the Word of God with irreverence when he is alive. When we speak of Swami Vivekananda, when we regard him as the prophet of Modern India, understanding by the term prophet not a fortune-teller, not an astrologer,—for remember Swami Vivekananda hated fortune-telling and astrology and fatalism,—we speak of him as the foreteller of God, not the foreteller of man's fortune, speaking the Word of God, and thereby refining the soul of his country. In

order to understand his place in India's history aright or judge in the true perspective the immortal services which he has rendered to his generation and to the generations to come with a view to inspire ourselves with the requisites and the legacies of his holy example, it is necessary just to take a brief review of when he came, when he went, the psychology of his days and when the star rose and set to rise again after his body had been severed from this earth. After English education had been introduced into this country, after we had come into contact with the West on account of a variety of circumstances of the time, our educated men were so attracted by the religion and religious institutions, by the literature, the political and history achievements of the West and the economic gains of Western political economy that under that glare there was the chance of our forgetting that India had also her own glories, her own civilisation, achieved at the cost of her life-blood, and that if a Nation is to be vitalised and to be rendered immortal, it ought to regain its vitality by catching hold of all the spirit, of all that is best and sacred in her own history, in all that experience which had been acquired by her own efforts, by her own failures, by her own mistakes and by her own successes. I am not at all sorry, I am rather glad, that soon after the British came, and introduced colleges and schools here, our education took a Western turn under the guidance of Macaulay. There are those who find fault with Macaulay for having laughed at the Eastern literature. Undoubtedly that was an exaggeration; but after all I have felt a little of exaggeration is wanted in order to emphasise a particular point. Only that exaggeration must not be indulged in for a

long time. What we call extremism has goodness in it until we have recovered the middle position, or rather progress. The late Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Keshub Chunder Sen rendered immortal services to India by trying to invigorate and fill the soul of India by means of Western literature and the Christian spirit. For when you are apt to be too fond of your own home, of your own little corner, of your own country, then you are apt to dislike it and look to other countries, for familiarity is apt to breed contempt, and you are apt to ignore the beauty that is in you and in your home and country. This could be done only by living aloof for some time from all those things with which you are daily familiar. A villager patient had under protests to go to a different place for a change to recoup himself at the recommendation of his doctor, and even though he had not left his village before even for once, on his return he found it to be much more grand, sublime, beautiful and invigorating. After having drunk deep of the Western literature and the Christian spirit introduced by the above-named Bengali pioneers, people began to go to England and America, and the life that was lived by them there and the experience gained and the changes wrought on their minds, enabled them to see in the right light the grandeur of our country, just as the patient was able to find out the goodness of his village after his return to it from his forced exile. Therefore it is that after we had been captivated by this Western literature, civilisation and politics and Western activity, and we were going in for it, the period of revival came. Most of us, in fact all of us, went through the period of revival. I had passed through it, lived through it and fought in it. I distinctly recollect that its first symptoms

were seen about the year 1877 when there was a reaction. There was reaction in religious reform, reaction in social reform and reaction in all sorts of reforms. That symptom was a protest against the blind following of all that was Western and an endeavour to prevent this blind following, an endeavour to see that we ought not to take any Western civilisation, swallow it, eat it and suffer from indigestion; but take only as much of it as is necessary in order to refine ourselves, our souls and our civilisation, literature and religious spirit of India. The leadstone of this Eastern Civilisation, the man who really typified the ancient soul of India and lived and worked as the vindicator of it and was steeped in the Eastern civilisation, is the master, the originator of Swami Vivekananda, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. You see him there (pointing out to the photo that was hanging in the Hall, of the Divine Person). He led the life of an ascetic, he led the life of a prophet. He discarded all the luxury and comfort of life. He went about and talked of God. There is one thing for which India has stood from the ancient times, and if there is one thing which India will always insist upon retaining, if there is one thing which will save her, it is the spirit of asceticism, it is the capacity which she has herself built from the ancient times, which is, "Leave mortal, sensual enjoyment and luxury, leave even your dress and everything and rush mad for immortal Spirit." Religion is no religion, civilisation is no civilisation, if at the back of it there is not what is called that spirit of asceticism, the spirit of flinging away life in order to gain it. There are those who say that this spirit of asceticism did a lot of harm to India. But let us understand this lesson from Swami

Vivekananda as taught to us by him, by the teachings of his Great Master, the part of truth and falsehood in it, in order to find the real Asceticism; and when India has understood and lived it, she will be able to occupy her proper place amongst these European nations.

Referring to the Sadhus who now-a-days are pooh-poohed and persecuted by the Western-educated as idlers and do-nothings, who ought not to be encouraged when they beg, he said that to him the Sadhu and the *gerrua-garb* was symbolic of the Soul of India; it reminded him of the fact that India had lived, moved and had her being entirely in the Spirit, in God-Absorption. On seeing the Sadhu clad in this yellow garb with nothing as his possession, a homeless wanderer on this earth, he was reminded of the fact so insistently preached by the Sages of India that the world and its interests were after all evanescent, that God and His Love were the only Truth. He as it were came to ask him, 'Off with this dress and all the worldly joys and luxury and to embrace the Life-spiritual.' He never turned away a Sadhu but always put a pice in his hands. He does not agree with those who would like the European people interdict begging and hand over beggars to the police. For could a Ramakrishna or Vivekananda have been possible if we had not honoured the beggar, had not revered the *gerrua-cloth*? Religion, the worship of God, means the life of the spirit. Whatever the intellectual capacity of the religious aspirant may be, he will be prepared to die for his brother, to help him and fling away luxury and lead the life of a monk, lead the life of a man who does not want rest or popular applause, but sings the glory of God and lives the life of immortality. There are some religions that say that you

must eat and enjoy. It is no use denying it. It is true. Hinduism says the same; but Hinduism also says, not to abuse the comforts of life, but let there be the spirit of asceticism and compassion and the spirit of dying for God, and live the life of privation, for the day comes when you may be called upon to suffer want and perfect yourself by suffering. After showing how Swami Vivekananda had lived up to all such maxims and principles by which he earned himself the name of modern apostle of God and the real interpreter of the East to the West, the speaker said: "We want political activity, we want industrial activity, but we want religious activity also, for no nation can live without religion, and least of all, India cannot do so. Make your religion aggressive, as Swami Govindananda told you. We want Vedanta which has been misunderstood."

After explaining where and how it has been misunderstood in certain quarters, and after also touching as to how Swami Vivekananda had been discovered, how religious teachers like Keshub Chunder Sei were not discovered in Bombay, the commercially busy Bombay, how the credit of discovering religious men goes to Madras, a province of religion and mysticism, while Bengal was the producer of vigorous, ardent and world-renowned intellectuality; Sir Narayan paid a very warm and well-merited tribute to the memory of Sister Nivedita for whom he had to say this that her life, her example, her selfless services, the ascetic life which she led, the way in which she spent herself among the shuns and the poorest of the people in Calcutta, how she revered Swami Vivekananda and his work, were each a thing beyond praise and said that her own works were such they ought not to perish, but were something

which we all ought to read about and live too. He then concluded by saying, "Let us remember, let us acknowledge the debt of gratitude we owe to Swami Vivekananda and pray God to enable us to live such lives that we may be able to say that we have left the world-religion and India firmer by trying to make it better."

EPISTLES OF
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

(Translated from Bengali.)

CLXX.

Murree,
10th October, 1897.

Dear—,

I am sorry to learn from your letter that you are not doing well. If you can make an unpopular man popular, there I call you a clever fellow. There is no prospect of work there in the future; it would have been better had you gone rather to Dacca, or some other place. However it is a good thing that the work will close in November. If you get very badly off in health, you should better come away. There is much field for work in the Central Provinces, and even without famine there is no lack of poverty-stricken people in our country. Wherever it is, if you can choose a site with an eye to prospect, you are sure to turn out good work. However, be not sorry. What one does has no destruction,—no, never. Who knows, at that very place the future may reap golden results.

I shall very soon begin my work in the plains. I have now no need of travelling over the mountains.

Keep watch over your health.

Yours affectionately,
Vivekananda.

CLXXI.

Muttee,
10th October, 1897.

My dear—,

I am very glad to receive your letter. You need not make a big plan for the present, but do only what is possible under existing circumstances. Gradually the way will open to you. We must certainly have the orphanage, no hesitating in that. We must not leave the girls in the lurch, either. But then we must have a lady superintendent for an orphanage of girls. I believe Mother—will be a very good hand for that. Or, engage for this task some aged widow of the village, who has no issue. And there must be separate places for the boys and girls. Captain Sevier is ready to send you money to help in this. Nedon's Hotel, Lahore,—that is his address. If you write to him, write the words, "To wait arrival," on the letter. I am soon going to Rawalpindi, to-morrow, or the day after, then I visit Lahore and other places via Jambu, and return to Rajputana, via Karachi etc.

I am doing well.

Yours,
Vivekananda.

P. S. You must admit Mahomedan boys too, but never tamper with their religion. The only thing you will have to do is to make separate arrangements for their food etc., and teach them so that they may be moral, manly, and devoted to doing good to others. This indeed is religion.

Shelve your intricate philosophical speculations for the present.

V.

In our country we at present need manhood and kindness. "स ईशः अनिर्वचनीयेऽप्यमस्त्वरूपः"—"The Lord is the Essence of unutterable Love." But instead of saying प्रकाशयते क्वापि पात्रे—"He is manifested in special objects," we should say, स प्रवक्ष एव सर्वेषां प्रेमरूपः—He is ever manifest as Love in all beings. What other God—the creation of your mind—are

you then going to worship! Let the Vedas, the Koran, the Puranas and all scriptural lumber rest now for some time—let there be worship of the visible God of Love and Kindness in the country. All idea of separation is bondage, that of non-differentiation is Mukti. Let not the words of people dead-drunk with worldliness terrify you. अस्तित्वः—“Be fearless!” Not men but worms! Admit boys of all religion—Hindu, Mahomedan, Christian or anything, but begin rather gently, I mean, see that they get their food and drink a little separately, and teach them only the universal side of religion.

V.

Be mad over this, and strike others with this madness! This life has no other end. Preach His name, let His teachings penetrate the world to the very bone. Never forget. Repeat this Mantram in your heart of hearts unceasingly, as you go the round of your daily duties.

Yours,
V.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND MODERN INDIA.*

MAN gives laws to Nature as Nature gives laws to man. Though man is regarded as a product of time, yet, in a sense, he transcends time, and what is beautiful and real in man springs from the ultimate Reality which finds expression in the world of phenomena. The man who, by dint of his gigantic personality, conquers the antagonistic forces of Nature and expels the dense illusion that hangs as the cosmic veil before Reality, is brought face to face with Reality. He is the hero, the prophet, the

man-god. Him we want to make objective the vision of the spirit which has no form. The real man comes with the solution of irreconcilable problems and a fund of energy which vitalises the morbid aspects of Nature.

When such a personality appears in the world, he begins to colour, conquer, and control all the departments of life and thought for some time. The person being a centre of many forces, becomes the scatterer of luminous ideas, which must have special institutions for expression, new weapons to fight with, and disciples to throw light upon their inner sense; for the man inhabits a higher sphere of life and thought to which others rise with great labour and difficulty. He gives laws to mankind, and the longings and hankerings of people find satisfaction so far as they follow his lead.

The saint, patriot and hero whom we have come to honour and worship this evening, is adorned not only in India, but also in countries beyond the seas; he gave what each of the nations wanted. He was verily a connecting link between the East and the West.

Before considering the point we should first of all be acquainted with the nature of that force whom we give the appellation of Swami Vivekananda. Swami Vivekananda is the counterpart of another mighty force which manifested itself in the person of Sri Ramakrishna. This unique personality reconciled in his life all the various forms of religion, by realising each of them, in their respective domains. His life was simply an eclectic perfection of all that was old in the sphere of spirituality, while Swami Vivekananda represented all that was New in the thought-world of India. He conserved in his person the spirit of modern India which he studied in all its details. In the blending of these two lives one sees, how the old is reconciled to the new. These two forces should be considered as a single whole which represented the true Indian culture in a

* Address given at Benares on the occasion of the 58th birthday celebration of Swami Vivekananda by Sj. Upendra Chandra Dutt M. A.

living form. Indeed, the life of the one is the expression and explanation of the life of the other. As the biographers write, "Sri Ramakrishna, the Teacher, Vivekananda the Preacher,—Sri Ramakrishna, the Man of Insight, Vivekananda, the Prophet of that Insight; these two were as one; through them both shines the effulgence of the spirit; and the life of the one is incomplete without the life of the other." The nature of a dual-force is not unknown to us, such a combination of forces is seen in Nara and Narayana of the Purāṇas. The versatile genius of Swami Vivekananda worked out the spirit of the Master in various spheres, material, intellectual and spiritual. He was not only a great Samyasi, he was a great Citizen as well. He was really the meeting-ground between the old and the new.

The Creator of nations has endowed each nation with a peculiar culture, and a special mission. His purpose is served when each nation delivers its message to the other nations of the globe. The message of the East, as it is seen, is Religion, while the message of the West is Politics. India has, from time to time, delivered her message of spirituality to the world, and she does not die for she has to carry to the other nations the great message of her immortal culture.

Now, what is culture? Culture is the unfoldment of the inner Reality. In the process of the evolution of a race, the soul of the race is manifested in its various aspects, intellectual, emotional, devotional, moral and so on, and art, Philosophy, Religion, social organisation etc., which grow with the race, bear the stamp of that culture. Indian culture is intensely *divine*, while the Western culture is purely *human*. These two cultures should be reconciled to make both the nations perfect, for that which you call the human spirit in man cannot last for ever without the divine element; whereas man as a disembodied spirit cannot be what he is.

With the French Revolution as the centre,

and the boundary of Europe as the circumference, a great movement was set on foot, to establish a sort of individual solidarity in the life and thought of the Western people. This was really the human form of Vedanta which, in its divine aspect, makes every individual the centre of the creation. The Greek worship of the beautiful was the corresponding human form of the Vedic worship of what was beautiful and sublime in Nature.

Now, these forms should be exchanged mutually to keep both alive. One wanted illumination, the other wanted strength. Swami Vivekananda devoted his whole life to the great task of supplying the needs of these nations. The Religious Parliament at Chicago afforded him this opportunity, he astonished the Western world with the spiritual culture of India, and it was once again that the down-trodden, despised India was held in high esteem by the nations of the world. "Therefore, while in the West one finds him uttering constantly the philosophy of the highest, urging the Western world to meditation, in the East one finds him preaching the spirit of public service, the spirit of a religious national life, the spirit of social unity, and the spirit of a social reform whose method is to be a growth from within."

His interpretation of Vedanta is a gospel of wisdom as well as of strength, and this can help a man in any sphere of life, physical, intellectual or moral. By preaching what is great and good in both, he helped the nations to appreciate each other. So Emerson says, "Great men are thus a collyrium to clear our eyes from egotism and enable us to see other people and their works." A true genius is really a liberator.

Before Swami Vivekananda became the world-figure, the condition of India was precarious. The political India was no doubt under a foreign control, but what was regrettable was that the culture of the nation was in conflict with the culture of the West. The

Western culture was gradually gaining ground. Real conquest consists not in the subjugation of a race but in controlling the cultural spirit of the race. The Greeks were conquered by the Romans but, in fact, the rulers were conquered by the ruled, for the Romans were highly influenced by the intellectual and aesthetic culture of the Greeks. When the vital condition of India was very critical, it was Swami Vivekananda who, for the first time, fought for his religious and national ideals, and dazzled the Western people who despised the Indians as barbarians. He secured laurels for his countrymen, and stopped short the course of those unscrupulous Indians who were being carried away by the materialistic civilisation of the West. Indian culture was saved for the time, not only for her own sake, but also for the good of the world. The hero conquered and he chalked out the path to be followed by the future generations.

Swami Vivekananda unlocks the gate which opens up a vast field of activity that has begun to stir India visibly for the last several years. True, he did not add a new form, the country was already teeming with innumerable forms. What he did, he tried to vitalise those pre-existing forms which were gradually dying out. He was verily, a voice without form, and silently the voice entered into all the beneficial forms, social, political, educational, and religious. The whole of Hindustan seems to be surcharged with his ideas, and consciously or unconsciously the sincere workers act on the principles given by the Swami. In this sense, he is the precursor of all the pioneer movements of modern India.

There are reasons why he did not make any social reform. The country was not fit for any reform at all. Who is to take reforms? The people were starving and covered in great darkness of ignorance. Let them first live and live vigorously and have the light of knowledge first, then social reform will follow. He left the work of reform to be carried

out by the coming generations, not only the reform of India, but also the reform of the world. To quote the words of the Swami, "Have that faith, each one of you, in yourself, that eternal power is lodged in every soul, and you will revive the whole of India. Aye, we will then go to every country under the sun, and our ideas will before long be a component of the many forces that are working to make up every nation in the world." What he wanted, above all, was a man-making institution—which would build up men in the true sense of the term, men of strong muscles, sound brain and melting heart. I believe, the invisible power has been working out the ideas, and leading the nation to the end it seeks to realise.

By a retrospective view of India, we come to know that the gradual unfolding of the national mind has given rise to three distinctive features of the spiritual life, Jnana, Bhakti and Karma, in succession. Though these features are practically inseparable from one another, yet every age is characterised and dominated by a particular aspect.

The first stage is marked by the realisation of self through knowledge. The Rishis of old used to spend their time and energy to this sort of realisation. They would subordinate everything, emotional and active, to that particular aspect of life—the realisation of Para-Brahma through pure knowledge. Lord Buddha is one of those mighty Rishis. His Nirvana is nothing but the annihilation of the lower self, the life of gross and refined matter. This is the same as Moksha. Though Himself a man of extraordinary heart, which makes the mighty spirit sublime and all the more attractive, still what he inculcated was the attainment of Nirvana. Jainism is almost similar to Buddhism.

The second stage is characterised by Love and devotion to a personal Deity. Here the emotional and the devotional side of man play their part. The Shaivas of Kashmir, the Vaishnavas of the Deccan, the Shaktas of

Bengal, the great devotees like Sri Chaitanya, Tulsidas, Ramdas, Guru Nanak, and others of Aryavarta, are the spiritual centres from which emanates the idea of duality which keeps the lover apart from the love. The devotee will live to love the Lord.

Hitherto human perfection consisted either in the realisation of the impersonal self through knowledge, or in the disinterested love of a Personal God through devotion, but the new era opens with the worship of humanity; the other two factors are subordinated to the worship of life, "He prayeth best who loveth best all men, and birds and beasts." One must know his true self and have the divine grace that he may be qualified for the worship of the eternal life which pervades the whole universe, but more truly and visibly the world of sorrows and sufferings. The lower self is silenced by the higher self, the lover is busy with his love, both are ego-centric and selfish in a way, but a worshipper of humanity has no centre of his own, his soul is objectified, his God pluralised. His individual life is one with the universal life. He gives whatever he has. Every

great soul is of this type, but no one preached this as the highest end of human life up till the 18th century. What Augustus Comte preached in France with his pen, Swami Vivekananda introduced in India with his life. Before giving this new lesson in its concrete form, Nature, like a good teacher, repeated the points of old lessons in the person of Sri Ramakrishna.

Now, service of humanity is no longer a means to a higher end, but an end in itself. So Swamiji liked to be born again and again to have the opportunity to worship his God, to serve the Narayana in the poor, the sick, the down-trodden, and the oppressed. In India he preached, and popularised the fiery gospel of Karma-yoga, by means of which the subjective vision of the One was transformed into the objective service of the many.

Now, to do homage to the great hero is to follow his foot-prints. To worship Vivekananda is not to worship an image but to worship mankind. In this worship, the Deity is Humanity, Mantra is *Nāham*, flower is life, *Dakshinā* is love, and the reward is self-dedication,

HYMN ON THE NATIVITY OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

श्रीशीनरेन्द्रसम्भवाष्टकम् ।

(श्रीसामिपादानां जन्मतिथि संसूत्य तदर्थनवासरे श्रीमदविर्भावसुपलक्ष्य च लिख्यते ।)

सुसप्तम्यां शैषे भुवनभवतैषस्य बहुले
स्वकान्त्या संकान्त्यां ग्रबपयति नवीनारुणविभाम् ।
विभाते कोश्यं कौ नवयुगविभातारुणसमो
विभात्यद्य प्राच्यां चितिसुहितहेतु नेरवरः ॥१॥

मदनदलनदर्पीं “जातकन्दर्पदर्पे”
प्रखरयिपिरकाले जात उग्रः स शूरः ।
निखिलभुवनहर्ष-“श्वित्तसन्तापहेतौ”
नरतुभिह धत्ते पश्य विश्वस्य नाथात् ॥२॥

1. In the winter—on the last day of the month of Pausha, itself a bliss to the world,—at the dawn of auspicious Krishna Saptami (the seventh day of the dark fortnight) who is this prince amongst men looming in the eastern horizon, eclipsing the rays of the rising sun by the effulgence of his beauty?

2. In the inclement winter, when the poets say, the animal instincts run riot, that Hero victorious in the struggle against passions, the Lord Siva, has incarnated Himself: and

"प्रचुरगुडविकौरे" हन्तुमुद्दर्यो विकाराम्
परममधुरसान्देशानिपीयूपरासिंम ।
वितरितुभिह रीते "स्वादुशालीक्षुरंम्ये"
समवतरति पृथ्व्यां कोऽपि जाड्यापहारी ॥३॥

कल्पशिशिरदुष्टा भूतधार्या यदा श्रीः
रातजडमतवादिकौश्चनादाकुला भूः ।
शिवसितकर्सेवावासना म्लानसूर्तिः
प्रभवति न हि भक्त्यां गन्धसरेऽनुरागः ॥४॥

सकलसुरभिलक्ष्मीमगिङ्गतो मूर्तपश्चः
स्फुटयितुभिह विश्वेश्वलावग्यपुञ्जस ।
चितिहितधृतदेहो विश्वनाथस्य गेहे
परमकरणाताया जायतेऽयं तदासौ ॥५॥

(युग्मकम्)

न दूरं सोऽद्वैतिभ्रमरपिकफङ्गरनिकर-
स्त्रयीवल्लीनां सा किशलकुमुमस्तोमसुपमा ।
तदागामि प्रेमामलमलयवातप्रवहश्च
पुरास्ते ते धर्मप्रभवयुगजात्यः स सुरभिः ॥६॥

स्वरोत्तिष्ठ श्रेष्ठं सुयुगमिह नेदिष्ठमभयं
सकृदद्वच्छा प्रेष्ठं भुवनपरमेष्ठं तव पुरा ।
युगोपास्यं विश्वास्तुतचरणरेणुं नरहरिं
कृतार्थत्वं यातु प्रभवतु च जीवः सपदि ते ॥७॥

जयतु जगति कृष्णा सप्तमी कर्मचारी
नवशुभयुगदुती विश्वकर्त्याणमूर्तिः ।
भुवनभविकपौषो मासमुख्यः प्रशस्यः
परमगरिमदीप्ता वङ्गमाता च पूता ॥८॥

श्रीमलोककल्याणावतारचक्कूडामणि-श्रीविवेकानन्दस्वामि-
पादपादारविन्दद्वृष्टपद्मदेन श्रीराधारण्यनन्दिसरस्वतीविद्या-
भूषणेन विरचितमेतददृकं समाप्तमिति ।

Io, the Bliss of the universe assumes a human form from Viswanath in this season which causes mental unrest.

3. In the winter when, as the poet describes, treacle is produced in profusion and delicious paddy and sugarcane render it genial, the Destroyer of dullness hath come down upon the earth to stamp out the evils of the world and distribute in abundance the luscious nectar of Divine knowledge.

4-5. When the beauty of the earth is contaminated by the taints of corruption and the world is upset by the cackling of materialists,—when the hankering after Divine bliss wanes as well as the attachment for devotion, that Incarnation of Siva, clothed in all the beauty and grandeur of spring hath descended to come to the abode of Viswanath, assuming a human form, to manifest the full vernal splendour all over the world.

6. Not far are the melodious hum and cooing of bees and cuckoos—the followers of Advaita. Not far is that beauty of the new foliage and flowers blossoming on the Creeper of the Vedas. O, the gentle breeze of pure love is forthcoming and that spring—the fountain of great religious upheaval,—stands before you.

7. Arise at once. The evolution of that great epoch which knows no fear is at hand, here below. Just have a look at that prince among men, the delight of the universe, the god of the Age,—the dust of whose feet is cherished by the world,—and let your soul be immediately blessed and ennobled.

8. Glory unto the Krishnasaptami day, the harbinger of the new auspicious Age, and the emblem of universal good. Glory unto the best of months, Pausha, itself the balm of the world, and unto Mother Banga, the holy, the exalted and the supremely glorious!

Radharaman Nandi Saraswati

Vidyabhushan,

XIV—CHIDAMBARA RAHASYAM.*

1.
O Constant Guide of Lov'rs who have attained
The Cosmic consciousness taught by a word,
This world of forms transformed a world of bliss,
O Love descending even into me,
O Mount Divine of Light and Endless Bliss,
Pervading full the body, mind and all
As fragrance dwells within the fresh-blown bloom
Half open like a tiny tinkler's mouth !

2.
The Soul of souls in all the countless grades;
The Spirit Absolute that stands alone
Immeasurable in Eternal Bliss,
O Lord that shin'st amid Thy Home of Grace
As spaceless Truth and as this empty show,
O Glory that installed me by Thy Lov'rs
In joy lest I should pine, a straggling deer!
O Mass of Bliss the Fruitage of Thy Grace!

3.
O Inundation of Bliss Supreme
That swept away all worldly gains as trash,
O Prize that bade me seek assuring me,
‘This is the path to speechless Glories all,’
O Thou Perfection that abideth whole
Beyond th’ accursed Maya’s horrid throng,
O Primal Kin that countless faiths pursue
As all the rivers reach the ocean’s lap !

4.
Devoid of birth and death, of source and end,
The Holy Wijs not finding Thee bewail;
The warring creeds diverge and wander wide
And mighty wranglers rave like men possessed,
O Flawless One that ‘neath the banyan shade
With balmy grace and moon-adorned didst teach
In peace with symbols mute the path of Peace
And camest still, my All-transforming Light !

5.
The Holy Books unfold Thy stainlessness
And all Thy hundred attributes and more :
With such a blessed form—and furthermore
Transcending all, beyond and yet beyond
Thou art the Home of Grace, O witness Thou,
That of Thy Grace dost help to realise

* In the Sanctum Sanctorum of the Chidambaram temple in South India there is no idol but the empty space called ‘The Akasha Lingam.’

Perfection, Oneness and the loss of self,
O Formless Flood e'er working nought but good.

6.

Thou art the One, Thou art the manifold,
Thou art the myriad-seeming rays of light,
Thou art the formless spacee and all the forms,
The good and bad Thou art and all besides,
O Father mine beyond both birth and death;
Beyond the present and the time to come;
O Lord, to those who cry like sons to Thee
Thy Mother’s Love goes forth, O Space of Grace !

7.

O Taste of Ripened Grace, O sweat a ssugarcane !
O Honey, O Abundant Nectar Sweet !
O Dear, mine Eye, O Giver of all rare boons !
O Peerless One and Perfect, full of love !
O Almost Essence of our deepest thoughts
That dost aратige all time and space and yet
The diverse orgaos all and sways all souls !
O Truth Supreme, O hear my prayer now !

8.

The Gods of heaven-world, the Lord of gods,
Naratla, the shining Rishis sev’n, th’ adepts
In Vina skilled, the countless Siddhas too,
Manu and other mighty kings of old,
The Vedic seers all—did not all these
Of world-renown pursue this path and win
Like fruit in hand, by Wisdom’s Light and force,
Freedom and all their wealth of pow’rs untold !

9.

The countless creeds, all hold their Gods supreme
And clinging to their favourite dogmas firm;
Exound aloud their sacred lore at length
In full accord with reason, facts and texts ;
Not one is false nor one alone is true ;
To those who cannot find the harmony
Of creeds, the Saiva faith is but a creed,
Transcending yet it comprehendeth all !

10.

Constant in aim, furnished with eightfold steps
Of Yoga cult, with the bliss of love,
Surrounded too by all the worldly ends,
Displaying all the grades of human worth,
Receiving too the homage of all lores,
With smaller aims, the Vedic Saiva faith
Exalted sits amid all regal pomp
Crowned with Eternal Peace ! How wondrous this !

—A. K.